

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	World Day for Safety and Health at Work: PSA calls for stronger commitment to safe workplaces
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On World Day for Safety and Health at Work, the Public Servants Association (PSA) reaffirms the Union's commitment to ensuring safer workplaces as workplace accidents, occupational diseases, and fatalities remain a global challenge.

This reality is also prevalent in many South African unsafe public-sector workplaces and underlines the urgent need for proactive interventions. The day serves as a call to action to prevent risks, protect workers, and promote a lasting safety culture. As a strong voice for workers, the PSA is dedicated to raising awareness on workplace hazards, advocating for safer conditions through collective bargaining, empowering workers with knowledge of their rights, and ensuring digitalisation benefits workers, rather than harming them.

Occupational health and safety (OHS) are fundamental rights of all workers. A strong OHS framework reduces the risk of workplace injuries, illnesses, and fatalities and fosters a culture of well-being, responsibility, and productivity. Safe workplaces contribute to worker satisfaction, increased efficiency, and economic stability. Employers and unions share the responsibility to uphold OHS standards. This includes implementing preventive measures, providing training, and ensuring compliance with workplace regulations.

Whilst digitalisation and artificial intelligence (AI) can improve workplace safety through real-time hazard detection and automated compliance monitoring, their implementation must not compromise worker well-being. Increased surveillance, job insecurity owing to automation, and heavier workloads are concerns that require careful regulation. To mitigate these risks, employers must strengthen health and safety policies that prioritise worker protection, have regular risk assessments to address emerging workplace hazards, provide comprehensive OHS training and awareness programs and enforce employer accountability for safe working conditions.

A culture of safety is not optional, it is essential. The PSA is committed to advocating for safer working conditions, raising awareness, and holding employers accountable for workplace safety standards. By cooperating, workplace injuries and fatalities can be reduced, ensuring that workers feel safe, valued, and protected. The PSA urges all stakeholders to always make occupational health and safety a priority.

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